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ARTICLES:

(1) PM Hatoyama to appoint "anti-Ozawa" Yukio Edano as his assistant in charge of administrative reform

MAINICHI (Top play) (Full)
Evening, January 1, 2010

Nariyuki Tanaka, Tetsuya Kageyama

Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama began on Jan. 7 arrangements to appoint former Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) Policy Research Committee Chairman Yukio Edano, 45, as his assistant. Edano will be in charge of administrative reform, and Hatoyama intends to ask him

to support the work of State Minister for Administrative Reform Yoshito Sengoku, who will be serving concurrently as state minister for national strategy after Finance Minister Hirohisa Fujii's resignation. A formal cabinet decision on this appointment will be made shortly. Edano is one of the most prominent DPJ Diet members who distance themselves from Secretary General Ichiro Ozawa. He has not held an important post so far, but will now occupy an influential position in the government.

Edano was the overall coordinator for the government's budget screening process last November and took the lead in negotiating with the ministries. In December, he became one of the 12 Diet members tasked with assisting the National Strategy Office and Government Revitalization Unit.

However, the Diet Law stipulates that only 17 Diet members can join the administration as prime minister or cabinet ministers, 22 as senior vice ministers, 26 as parliamentary secretaries, 5 as prime minister's assistants, and 3 as deputy chief cabinet secretaries, making a total of 74. Therefore, Edano had not been able to join the administration legally up until now. With his appointment as assistant to the Prime Minister, he will now be able to participate in government meetings, among other things. It is expected that he will take charge of the reform of independent administrative agencies and public welfare corporations after his formal appointment.

Edano is a leading Diet member who distances himself from Ozawa. In the presidential election of September 2008, he had once indicated his intention to run against Ozawa. It is believed that the

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appointment of Edano is at the request of Sengoku, who also distances himself from Ozawa. It is possible that this may annoy the Ozawa camp.

Two close confidants of Hatoyama, Yoshikatsu Nakayama and Katsuya Ogawa were appointed as prime minister's assistants at the time the Hatoyama cabinet was launched in September. Satoshi Arai, who became an assistant in October, is a close aide to Deputy Prime Minister Naoto Kan and is in charge of national strategy. Seiji Aizaka, who took up the post in December, is responsible for decentralization of power, assisting Internal Affairs Minister Kazuhiro Haraguchi.

(2) Hatoyama administration's diplomatic issues

ASAHI (Page 4) (Full)
January 6, 2010

Futenma relocation: High hurdle for continued use of Futenma heliport facility

Keiichi Kaneko

In reference to the relocation of the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in his press conference at the beginning of the year, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama clearly stated on Jan. 4: "I promise to reach a conclusion by a certain date." He intends to decide on a replacement site for the Futenma base and reach an agreement with the U.S. government in May. However, gaining understanding from local municipalities is the main premise for the central government to decide on a relocation site. In addition, it is extremely difficult for the government to obtain the U.S. government's consent to its plan.

As the second-best plan, the idea is being floated that the continued use of the present Futenma heliport facility should be allowed after relocating part of training activities based on Futenma to an island in the prefecture. Yet, the government has to clear two hurdles: one is to secure local understanding and the other is to convince Washington.

Last fall Hatoyama could have made an anguished decision to go along with the plan to relocate Futenma to the Henoko district in Nago City, Okinawa Prefecture. However, he postponed a conclusion for the present because he gave priority to maintaining the coalition

framework. Last December Democratic Party of Japan Secretary General Ichiro Ozawa expressed a negative view toward the relocation of Futenma to Henoko. As a result, the possibility of implementing the existing plan has gradually diminished.

One result of the change in government is probably that the new government has obtained the opportunity to review the diplomatic strategies of former governments, Japan-U.S. relations, and the presence of U.S. forces in Japan. Although we feel impatient, we should wait for the Hatoyama administration to find a better option.

Secret deal issue: ban on introduction of nuclear weapons to become focal point

Masahiro Tsuruoka

This year, the committee of experts, chaired by University of Tokyo

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Professor Shinichi Kitaoka, will formulate a report on the Foreign Ministry's investigation into secret Japan-U.S. agreements, including the secret accord on introducing nuclear weapons. This year also will likely be a year of Japan's nuclear policy to be called into question head on.

The secret accord on introducing nuclear weapons was reached between Tokyo and Washington in 1960 when the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty was revised. The secret nuclear deal stipulates that calls at Japanese ports by U.S. ships and by aircraft carrying nuclear weapons do not fall into the category of nuclear introduction, for which prior consultations between the two countries are required. The Japanese side's documents supporting the existence of records on discussions were discovered through the ministry's investigation. In connection with the secret accord concluded in 1972 when Okinawa was returned to Japanese rule, the document, signed by then Prime Minister Eisaku Sato and U.S. President Richard Nixon, had been kept as a personal memento of Sato.

If the committee acknowledges the existence of the secret accord on introducing nuclear weapons, the discrepancy with the three non-nuclear principles of not producing, possessing, or allowing entry of nuclear weapons to Japan will become the subject of debate.

During the campaign for the House of Representatives election last year, Hatoyama pledged to call for Washington's assurance not to bring nuclear weapons into Japan. Until the House of Councillors election this summer, he has to give consideration to the Social Democratic Party (SDP), one of the junior coalition partners, which has called for giving the three non-nuclear principles legal force. However, the legislating of the three principles goes against the U.S. policy of neither confirming nor denying (NCND). Moreover, such a move might have an impact on the foundation of the Japan-U.S. alliance, which shelters Japan under the U.S. nuclear umbrella.

U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates gave Japan warning last autumn, saying: "Japan should not have any negative influence on extended deterrence or Japan-U.S. relations." Hatoyama will be forced to make a tough decision.

(3) "Japan@the World" column: The administration's diplomatic ability put to test

ASAHI (Pages 1, 15) (Full)
January 7, 2010

Yoichi Funabashi, chief editor

Will the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) administration grow into an administration with vitality? This year will truly be a year in which it will be put to the test.

The toughest test will be foreign and security policy. Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama stated at his news conference on Jan. 4: "In a sense, half of national administration has to do with foreign

policy and security." It is evident that he had the conflict with the U.S. over the Okinawa base issues in mind when he made this statement. If the administration suffers a major setback in Japan-U.S. relations, the DPJ may be dismissed by the people as a political party not qualified to handle foreign policy.

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The world is undergoing major changes. Both the bipolar world of the U.S. and the Soviet Union during the Cold War and the unipolar world dominated by the U.S. in the post-Cold War period have ended. International affairs have begun to revolve around the G-20 born after the Lehman shock and the G-2 consisting of the U.S. and China. Along with the power shift toward the newly emerging economies, such as China and India, a power fusion is taking shape, under which the U.S. and China are moving toward some form of symbiotic relationship. For over the past 30 years, Japan has focused its global policy on the G-7 or G-8, the club of the industrialized nations (Japan and Western countries), but this policy is hollowing out with the advent of the G-20 and the G-2.

However, it remains unclear to what extent the G-20 or the G-2 can serve as a framework for world order in the 21st Century. Both may end as mere processes for crisis management.

What is certain is the rise of Asia and the Pacific and the onset of the low-carbon society. In that sense, the DPJ administration was right in advocating as policy ideals the "East Asian community" and "25 percent reduction in Japan's greenhouse gas emissions."

However, how can these ideals be realized? What diplomatic groundwork is required for their realization? Before taking the reins of government the DPJ had not held a proper debate on these ideals. It now has to undergo "on the job training."

It appears that the world economy is finally moving toward post-Lehman shock recovery.

The newly emerging economies, particularly China, are driving this process. According to the IMF (International Monetary Fund), the newly emerging economies and the developing countries contributed to as much as 80 percent of economic growth after the Lehman shock. Growth in Asia and the Pacific has been particularly strong. The movement of wealth from Europe and America to Asia and the Pacific is also proceeding apace.

Along with this, the influence of the newly emerging nations has also grown. A new force termed BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India, and China) ascended the international stage at the 15th Conference of Parties to the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP15) in Copenhagen in late 2009. They jointly resisted the "legally binding emission reduction goals" proposed by the advanced nations. Earlier the term BRICs (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) was used to refer to the major high-growth nations, but this was mere market jargon. The BASIC is a bloc that speaks out on global governance. This one is a political term.

For sure, this is probably a natural occurrence, since for the first time in history we are in an era when the majority of the world's population is speaking up on the world order.

Asia and the Pacific hold the key to this process. Nine of the G-20 are members of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) conference. As U.S. President Barack Obama stated, "Growth relying excessively on U.S. consumption and Asia's exports to the U.S. is no longer sustainable." Asia needs to generate demand within the region and promote closer regional integration.

It is important to share the fruits of such growth and opportunities with the world. If only to promote this process, Japan needs to make

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greater efforts to push for free trade agreements (FTAs) with Asian countries, as well as with the U.S. Yet neither the "new growth

strategy" presented by the Hatoyama administration nor the section on the Japan-U.S. FTA in the DPJ's manifesto make mention of a Japan-ROK FTA (or a Japan-China-ROK FTA, to go a step further), which would form the core of the "East Asian community." This is probably from concern about the liberalization of agricultural imports. But then, this is also precisely where a change of administration can make a difference. Another issue is that the APEC members of the G-20 should begin unofficial consultations to work for more organic links between APEC and the G-20. Fortunately, Japan will be hosting the APEC Summit this November. This will be an opportunity for Japanese diplomacy to play its role.

Coming to the advent of the G-2, no such organization exists at this point. Both the U.S. and China deny any such special relationship. The U.S.-China dialogue, in a way, is necessary because they have more issues on which they are in conflict than issues they are able to agree on. In spite of this, their financial integration has given birth to a de facto G-2.

China purchases U.S. bonds with the dollars from its trade surplus with the U.S., and the U.S. funds its fiscal deficits with these bonds. Although the U.S. wants to see the appreciation of the Chinese yuan, imprudent initiation of this process may lead to a sharp decline in the value of the dollar. The U.S.-China relationship has come to be called MADE (economic mutually assured destruction), the economic version of the nuclear "balance of terror" termed MAD (mutually assured destruction).

There is an increasing number of areas in which the U.S. will require China's cooperation, not just in economic growth, trade, and finance, but also with regard to nuclear weapons, terrorism, global warming, building of peace, and so forth. Harvard University Professor Iain Johnston observes that, "China has become an insider in the international system." The G-2 can be regarded as the U.S.'s means to make China even more of an insider in order to rationalize the U.S. world strategy.

For sure, there is strong criticism of China in the U.S. If the U.S. pushes forward with "integration" unwelcome by its own people, it may be at risk of being driven into isolationism. Furthermore, depending on the direction the G-2 takes and how it is handled, this may destabilize relations with the European Union (EU), Japan, Russia, India, and other countries.

Japan can serve as an "automatic stabilizer" between the U.S. and China by stabilizing its own relations with these two countries. It should think about a policy dialogue among Japan, the U.S., and China to promote this process. Here it should not be forgotten that the Asian and Pacific nations regard the Japan-U.S. alliance as a public property in the region. The ROK, Australia, Singapore, and Vietnam have conveyed their "concerns" unofficially to the U.S. regarding the Hatoyama administration's view of the U.S. and policy toward the U.S. This should be taken seriously.

Certain Obama administration officials think that there is a latent tendency of "breaking away from the U.S." in the Hatoyama administration's foreign policy and are skeptical about the real substance of its policy. Is this in response to the decline of U.S. power? A reflection of the growing economic dependence on China? The beginnings of an independent policy line? Or is it an indication of

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isolationism? World Bank President Robert Zoellick, who came to Japan via India last month, shook his head and asked: "Both China and India are devising ways to use the U.S. However, Japan seems to be thinking of ways to break away from the U.S. Why is that?"

Japan will have to rebuild the foundation of its foreign policy in the age of the G-20 and the G-2. This foundation will consist of regional integration in Asia and the Pacific and the Japan-U.S. alliance. It will have to reconfirm the Japan-U.S. alliance as a force for stability and deterrence in the region, as well as redefine the alliance in the new era after the Cold War and the post-Cold War period. Japan will need to have such juggling skills.

A transition period offers both opportunities and risks. Japan

should not act recklessly. Single-mindedness is also dangerous. "On the job training" is fine. Japan should acquire the skills for survival by adopting a multifaceted approach in dealing with issues.

(4) Alliance of subordination -- 50 years after revision of Japan-U.S. Security Treaty (Part 1): Futenma issue

AKAHATA (Page 1 & 2) (Excerpts)
January 3, 2010

U.S. initially calls for relocation of Futenma base

Half a century has passed since the current Japan-U.S. Security Treaty was signed on Jan. 19, 1960. Now that many military alliances across the world have been dissolved or have become dysfunctional, the Akahata is investigating from multiple angles the current state of the Japan-U.S. alliance, which contains strong elements of risk and subordination. The investigation begins with the issue of relocating the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in Okinawa.

A gray U.S. military helicopter flew over children at the Aragusuku Children Center in Ginowan City, which is located only 100 meters from the Futenma Air Station -- the base of the U.S. Marine Corps Helicopter Squadron. The center has been designated as an evacuation site in the event of a U.S. military aircraft crashing on Second Futenma Elementary School, which is adjacent to the Futenma base.

A female employee said: "Students and their parents who transfer here from other schools are surprised at the noise of helicopters, which sounds like the noise on a battlefield. Some families move away after a year or so because they can't take the noise."

Hatsu Gima, 70, a worker at the day nursery "Akachan (baby) House," also said: "It's hard because the roaring sound wakes up the sleeping children and they start crying. We have suffered the thundering noise of helicopters for too long. I want to be rid of this noise as soon as possible. Everybody is hoping to live in a quiet town."

Japan and the U.S. took up the relocation of the Futenma base for the first time in 1988, seven years before an incident in which a schoolgirl was raped by U.S. Marines in 1995. An electronic mail dated March 6 in 1995 that was circulated in the Marine Corps Headquarters in Okinawa notes: "(Then) Okinawa Governor Junji Nishime cited problems with the seven sites whose return (his government) has demanded when he visited (the U.S.) in 1988. One of the sites was the Futenma base"

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In response to the request from Nishime, the Japanese government and the U.S. military agreed to hold meetings of a facility adjustment subcommittee under the Japan-U.S. Joint Committee.

In the latter half of 1970s, the Marine Corps Helicopter Squadron was moved to the Futenma base from the Hamby Air Field (in Chatan-cho) when the airfield was returned to Japan. Around that time, the population in the city also began to increase sharply (from 54,000 in fiscal 1975 to 90,000 at present).

The frequency of occurrences of noise generated by helicopters grew from about 18,000 in fiscal 1985 to over 30,000 in fiscal 1995. Crashes involving Futenma-based aircraft have occurred one after another. Even Junji Nishime, who is a leader of the Liberal Democratic Party's conservative politics in Okinawa, had to demand the return of the Futenma base because it has become "the most dangerous base in the world."

The U.S. side noted in a document produced by the Japan-U.S. subcommittee in 1990: "It would be possible to return the Futenma base on the condition that the facility would be relocated to an appropriate site," according to the electronic mail.

U.S. had information of illegal state of Futenma

Following an agreement reached between then Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto and then U.S. Ambassador Mondale to return the Futenma airfield to Japan, the U.S. Marine Corps Headquarters prepared a document in which it was noted that "the return of the Futenma base would mean the loss of the U.S. military's capabilities."

On the Futenma base, there is a 2,800 meter-long runway, which can accommodate even the takeoff and landing of fighters and large transport planes, so the base must have great strategic value for the U.S. military.

Despite this fact, why was the U.S. looking for possible relocation sites before 1995? The reason can be found in the U.S. Marine Corps Futenma Air Station Master Plan drawn up by the U.S. Department of the Navy.

In this document, the phrase "clear zone" appears frequently. The document says: "The clear zone of the Futenma Air Station is an area in which the safety of takeoffs and landings is ensured, with no obstacles." The size of the clear zone is set at 450 to 690 meters wide and about 900 meters long from the edge of a runway. Under the U.S. Federal Aviation Act, it is prohibited to build any structures in a clear zone.

But Ginowan Municipal Government's Policy Office head Shigeo Yamauchi said: "Based on our examination of a map and the basic register of residents after obtaining the master plan in 2007, we found 3,600 citizens residing in and about 800 houses and 18 public facilities, hospitals, and day-care centers situated in the clear zone."

The master plan also includes the results of an examination of the details of the buildings in the clear zone. The U.S. military was aware of the "illegal state" of the Futenma base as of 1992.

The U.S. military expanded the Futenma functions as much as possible

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in and after the 1970s. As a result, "the clear zone, which had been within the base, has been expanded beyond the base site," said Okinawa University Emeritus Professor Moriteru Arasaki.

In August 2004, a U.S. military helicopter crashed into the campus of Okinawa International University. It was almost miraculous that nobody was killed in this accident. Parliamentary Defense Secretary Akihisa Nagashima recently made this comment: "The Futenma base is a vulnerable part of the Japan-U.S. alliance. Another incident could immediately blow up the bilateral alliance."

(5) MOFA sets up office to accelerate study on accession to Hague Convention

ASAHI (Page 6) (Slightly abridged)
January 7, 2010

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) is moving forward in its study on Japan's accession to the Hague Convention, which sets down rules on "child abduction" cases in which one parent in a failed international marriage takes a child to his or her home country without the other parent's consent, including rules on returning children to their countries of residence. It has created an office in the ministry in charge of this matter and will engage in consultations shortly with the U.S., which is involved in the largest number of cases pertaining to Japan. However, there are still many issues that need to be resolved before Japan can accede to the convention.

"Child abduction" has become a problem for the Western countries that are signatories to the Convention, and at meetings of foreign ministers and on other occasions there has been growing pressure on Japan to sign the treaty.

Since Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada assumed office, he has indicated that Japan will "actively" consider the matter of signing the treaty. Last December, MOFA set up a new "office on issues of parental rights on children" staffed by nine officials in charge of

Europe and America and international treaties. The new office will not only deal with cases at issue with other countries, but will also be responsible for studying Japan's accession to the treaty in the future.

MOFA has also set up with France a forum for consultations on specific cases. At its first meeting in December, the French side provided a list of 35 cases and explained eight serious cases in which the Japanese mothers who took the children away refused the French fathers' requests to visit the children or even refused to accept letters and photos from them. The Japanese side promised to offer assistance, such as by relaying messages.

According to the "parental rights office," foreign governments have reported the following numbers of cases of "child abduction": 73 from the U.S., 33 from the UK, and 36 from Canada (as of October 2009).

However, there are many hurdles to clear before Japan can sign the treaty. Since there are reportedly many cases in which Japanese wives fled home to Japan with their children because their former husbands have inflicted violence on them, some people feel strongly that these mothers and children need protection.

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Furthermore, the concept of family is different between Japan and the Western countries. While the Western countries recognize "joint parental authority," under which both parents exercise parental rights, Japan only recognizes "sole parental authority," under which only one parent has parental rights, and there is a deep-rooted notion that the mother should have custody of the children.

Legislation will also be required before Japan can accede to the Hague Convention. However, only MOFA officials are currently engaged in consultations with the U.S. and France from the Japanese side, and the officials of the Justice Ministry and courts are not involved. In reality, MOFA can only serve as a "liaison" for now.

(6) Local suffrage for permanent foreign residents: Fear of current status of Japan's ethnic Koreans becoming perennial

YOMIURI (Page 13) (Full)
January 6, 2010

Taikin Tei, Tokyo Metropolitan University professor

Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) Secretary General Ozawa has expressed his intention to submit a bill granting local suffrage to permanent foreign residents this year. I would like to present two reasons that I am opposed to the bill.

The local suffrage bill for permanent foreign residents appears to be generally understood as Japanese political circles' favorable response to a request filed by Japan's ethnic Koreans, but this is a misconception. Many ethnic Koreans intend to continue living in Japan. They want to obtain Japanese nationality if an opportunity arises. It has long been said that there are 600,000 ethnic Koreans in Japan with special permanent residency status. However, the number has now dwindled to approximately 400,000. That is because nearly 10,000 ethnic Koreans annually obtain Japanese nationality. Ethnic Koreans who marry Japanese do not let their children have Korean or North Korean nationalities.

Most ethnic Koreans were born in Japan. They have South Korean or North Korean nationalities. However, they lack a sense of belonging to their home countries and awareness that they are foreigners in Japan. If local suffrage is granted to such people, their ill-defined status will continue perpetually. They are dummy Koreans and dummy foreigners. They find it difficult to explain their status. The local suffrage bill for permanent foreign resident is intended to preserve ethnic Koreans as foreigners eternally.

Second, we must oppose the bill, because there is fear that local suffrage for permanent foreign residents will encourage foreign government's interference in Japan's domestic politics. According to

the statistics compiled at the end of 2008, there are 420,000 special permanent residents - those who came to Japan before or during the War from Japan's former colonies, such as the Korean Peninsula and Taiwan. There are 490,000 general permanent foreign residents. Most of them are from China, Brazil or Peru. Chinese permanent residents are likely to increase in the future.

Some say that since the suffrage bill for foreign permanent residents only covers local elections, it would not affect the basis of the sovereignty of the people. However, the borderline between national politics and local politics is unclear. Since such issues as the Self-Defense Forces, U.S. military bases, nuclear power

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plants, the Takeshima/Dokdo islets, and the Senkaku islands (referred to as Diaoyu by China and Tiaoyutai by Taiwan) are closely linked to national policies, there is a strong possibility of permanent foreign residents voting in ways that conflict with Japan's diplomatic and security policies.

Will the Chinese government be able to remain indifferent to permanent Chinese residents in Japan? There may be occasions when the Chinese government politically tries to use them, as the South Korean and the North Korea governments did. Immigration meant separation from home countries in the past. However, a situation in which immigrants maintain not only cultural bonds with their home countries but also political bonds is seen throughout the world. There are people who believe that the Japanese archipelago does not belong only to the Japanese both in Japan and outside Japan.

It is very interesting that the Korean Residents Union in Japan systematically stepped up its efforts (to influence) Japan's national politics during last year's Lower House election campaign. They reportedly invited candidates running on the tickets of leading political parties to exchange views with them and urged them to support the idea of granting local suffrage to permanent foreign residents. I could have predicted that the Korean Residents Union in Japan would demand rights to vote in national election sooner or later. Their behavior seen during the Lower House campaign period was indeed a preparatory exercise for that.

In the meantime, Japan's ethnic South Koreans will be able to take part in national elections in South Korea starting in 2012 following the amendment to that nation's public office election law. They will be able to exercise their right to vote in South Korea's presidential elections and general elections. As a result of this, however, they are bound to come under fire for receiving special privileges.

ROOS